

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Spit-Tobacco Users Urged To Quit** *Great American Spit Out Celebrated February 21*

BISMARCK, N.D. – Emphasizing the fact that spit tobacco is not a safe alternative to smoking, the North Dakota Department of Health’s (NDDoH) Tobacco Prevention and Control Program encourages spit-tobacco users to get help with quitting during the Great American Spit Out February 21.

“Now that all North Dakota workplaces have become smoke-free, there is concern that more people will begin turning to smokeless tobacco products, like chewing tobacco, dip, snuff and snus,” said Krista Headland, director of the NDDoH’s Tobacco Prevention and Control Program. “These products are not a safe alternative to smoking. They all contain addictive nicotine and many harmful chemicals. Smokeless tobacco use increases the risk of lip, tongue, cheek and mouth cancers and can cause other cancers, heart disease and strokes, high blood pressure, tooth decay and gum disease.”

In North Dakota, spit tobacco is used by 8.2 percent of adults and 13.6 percent of students in grades nine through 12. Boys in grades nine through 12 use spit tobacco at a rate of 22.2 percent, and 14.8 percent of adult males are spit-tobacco users.

“During the Great American Spit Out, we encourage spit-tobacco users, and users of any other smokeless tobacco products, to quit for a day, with the hope they will then try to quit for good,” Headland said. “Tobacco users can use the NDQuits telephone, online and mobile services to help them through the process of quitting.”

Along with counseling services and support, NDQuits also offers free nicotine patches, gum or lozenges for those who qualify.

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The Great American Spit Out is being held during Through with Chew Week (February 17-23). Through with Chew Week was started in 1989 by the American Academy of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery Inc., in an effort to decrease spit-tobacco use and to raise awareness about the dangers of using spit tobacco.

For help with quitting spit tobacco or other smokeless tobacco products, visit NDQuits at 1.800.QUIT.NOW (1.800.784.8669) or [www.ndhealth.gov/ndquits](http://www.ndhealth.gov/ndquits).

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